

## Complaints Procedure

### Scope of the policy

This policy is provided for Up-Skilled Ltd (hereafter Up-skilled) customers, including learners and staff members who are using or delivering the courses or qualifications Up-Skilled offer.

### Communication of the policy

It is important that staff involved in the management, delivery, assessment and quality assurance of the awarding body's qualifications and learners undertaking these qualifications, are fully aware of the contents of the policy.

### Policy Statement

Up-Skilled is committed to providing a quality service for its learners and staff members, working in an open and accountable way that builds the trust and respect. One of the ways in which we can continue to improve our service is by listening and responding to the views of our staff members, customers and learners, by responding positively to complaints, and by putting mistakes right.

### Statement of Principles

Up-Skilled aim to ensure that:

- making a complaint is as easy as possible
- we treat a complaint as a clear expression of dissatisfaction with our service, which calls for an immediate response
- we deal with it promptly, politely and confidentially
- we respond in the right way - for example, with an explanation or apology
- we learn from complaints, use them to improve our service, and review annually our complaints policy and procedures

We recognise that many concerns will be raised informally, and dealt with quickly. Our aims are to:

- resolve informal concerns quickly
- enable mediation between the complainant and the individual to whom the complaint has been referred

An informal approach to dealing with a complaint may be appropriate; however, if concerns cannot be satisfactorily resolved informally, then the formal complaints procedure must be followed

**Definition:** A complaint can be defined as 'any expression of dissatisfaction that relates to Up-Skilled and that requires a formal response'.

**Purpose:** The formal complaints procedure is intended to ensure that all complaints are handled fairly, consistently and wherever possible resolved to the complainant's satisfaction.

Up-Skilled responsibilities are to:

- Acknowledge the formal complaint in writing.
- Respond within the stated period.
- Deal reasonably and sensitively with the complaint.
- Act where appropriate.

**Confidentiality:** Except in exceptional circumstances, every attempt will be made to ensure that both the complainant and Up-Skilled maintain confidentiality. However, the circumstances giving rise to the complaint may be such that it may not be possible to maintain confidentiality (with each complaint judged on its own merit). Should this be the case, the situation will be explained to the complainant.

## Stage 1

If a complaint is unable to be resolved informally, the complainant should write/email their complaint to a relevant Up-Skilled staff member, so that they have a chance to put things right. In the letter/ email, it should set out the details of the complainant's complaint, the consequences for them thus, and the remedy they are seeking.

## Stage 2

If a complainant is not satisfied with the initial response to a complaint, they can write to Up-Skilled Centre Manager and ask for their complaint and the response from Up-Skilled to be reviewed.

Complaints will be acknowledged by Up-Skilled within 5 working days of receipt of a complaint. Complaints will be investigated by relevant Up-Skilled staff members. As part of the investigation regarding a complaint, a Up-Skilled staff member may undertake interviews with the relevant people involved. A complainant will be informed of the investigation outcome and decision within 15 days of a complaint being acknowledged (this may be extended, depending on the nature of the complaint).

Up-Skilled aim is to resolve all matters as quickly as possible. However, some issues will be more complex and therefore may require longer to be fully investigated. If a matter requires more detailed investigation, a complainant will receive an interim response describing what is being done to deal with the matter, and when a full reply can be expected and from whom.

## Final Stage

If a complainant is not satisfied with the subsequent reply from Up-Skilled Centre Manager, then they have the option to contact the registered awarding body with regards to their complaint. The registered awarding body will undertake an investigation into any complaints received, in line with the awarding body's Complaints Policy.

All documents relating to a complaint must be saved and stored securely in the centre. The awarding body must be given access to any information or documents regarding any complaints when requested.

## Review of the policy

Up-Skilled will review the policy annually and revise it as and when required in response to customer feedback, changes in practices, actions required by the registered awarding body or changes in legislation. Our review will ensure that our procedures continue to be consistent with the regulatory criteria and are applied properly and fairly in arriving at judgement.